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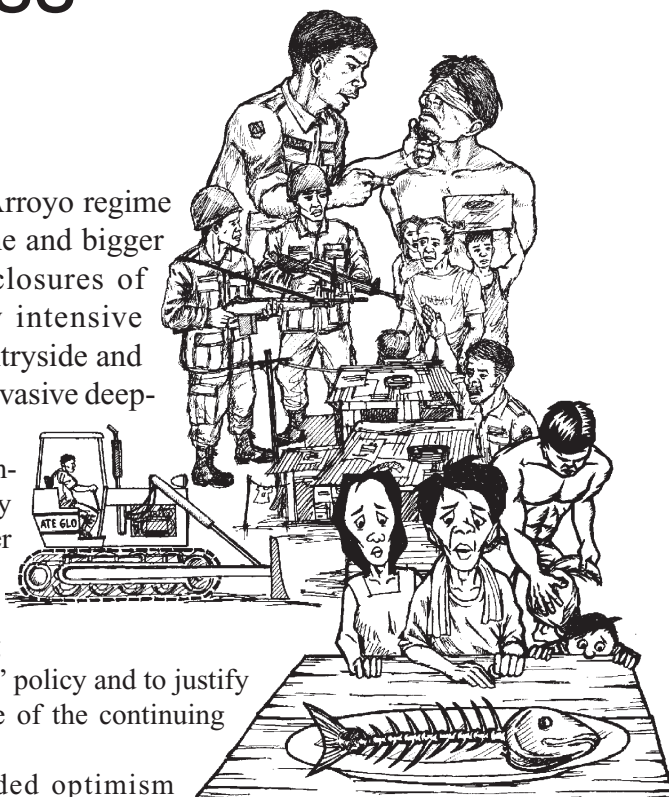
EDITORIAL

A year of hardships and ruthlessness for the people

The first year of the Macapagal-Arroyo regime was marked by economic decline and bigger hardships for the people, disclosures of large-scale corruption, increasingly intensive militarization in many areas in the countryside and grave violations of human rights and pervasive deep-seated discontent among the people.

Macapagal-Arroyo boasted this December that the state of the national economy continues to be rosy and on the road to further advance in the coming year. She convened a National Socio-Economic Summit on December 10 in order to unite the ruling classes into accelerating the “globalization” policy and to justify and proffer militarist measures in the face of the continuing and worsening crisis in the country.

But Macapagal-Arroyo’s unfounded optimism cannot cover up the true state of the Philippine economy, conspicuous for the further slowdown of export-oriented production due to the world crisis of overproduction. Electronic and computer-related products are the principal exports of the Philippines from the special economic zones (SEZ), but the market for these products is presently in the doldrums. This has resulted in the steep plunge of investments in the SEZ in 2001, resulting in the mass retrenchment of workers.





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A CALL TO OUR READERS

The Editorial Staff of Ang Bayan calls on readers to contribute to our publication by submitting comments and suggestions, news items or revolutionary experiences that are worth printing in our paper.

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The massive layoffs have all the more pushed hundreds of thousands of workers and their families into more severe destitution and desperation. In the meantime, the take-home pay of workers is far too meager for them and their families' decent living, especially given the continuing rise in the price of commodities. The call and struggle of the workers for a P125 across-the-board daily wage increase is widespread. Despite the urgency of such a just demand, Macapagal-Arroyo continues to stubbornly oppose it. Instead of raising wages, a token P30 Emergency Cost of Living Allowance was implemented in virtual ridicule of the workers.

The economists of the regime brag that agriculture made a big headway in 2001. However, this increase in production is all relative to the continued slump in the agricultural sector during the last two years as a result of bad weather.

Actually, whatever is pointed to as "progress" in agriculture in 2001 was more so along the lines of production for export and did not respond to the needs of the people, especially in regard to food. Due to the callous liberalization of agriculture according to WTO dictates, the production of essential agricultural products for consumption has been on the downtrend. The food security of the Filipino people is all the more endangered. During the past years, the extent of lands planted with mango, asparagus, banana, pineapple and other export products had doubled. On the other hand, rice shortages and rice importations have been increasing as a result of its dwindling production and the liberalization of agricultural imports. The privatization of the NFA and of rice importation is now being accelerated. The regime is even encouraging rice farmers to import rice! Together with these, various imports of agricultural products have been flooding the country.

Nothing is being done by the government to implement genuine land reform. On the other hand, the regime and Danding Cojuangco have colluded in the large-scale landgrabbing and forcible conversion of farmlands that have been the source of livelihood of more than a hundred thousand peasants from Isabela, Negros and Mindanao. Instead of helping the peasant masses increase their incomes, the regime has done nothing to obtain a just increase in the farm gate prices of agricultural products.

In the face of the unprecedented poverty of the people, corruption and profligate lifestyles of the highest officials in government, including those closest to the president, have become blatant. Thousands of

cases of corruption have been filed in various agencies of government. No less than Miguel Arroyo, the president's husband, and members of the Cabinet closest to the president, such as Sec. Hernando Perez, and presidential advisers, such as Norberto Gonzales, have been involved in anomalous contracts, in perpetrating pressure tactics and maneuvers in business, in secret deals and various other cases involving billions of pesos.

The economic crisis, worsening people's poverty and the ruling regime's continued trampling of the people's interest have caused widespread disgust. Struggles of workers and other democratic sectors in the cities are growing in strength; so too, the armed struggle and antifeudal struggles in the countryside. The revolutionary movement is fast advancing and gaining force throughout the country.

The Macapagal-Arroyo regime responds with a renewed level of violence: harsh military operations and rampant violations of human rights. Right after the May elections, martial rule has been reigning in many places in the countryside by means of large-scale military concentrations and military operations. Since then, there has been no letup in the military's rampage.

In terms of breadth, intensity and ruthlessness of destruction in the countryside, the newly seated Macapagal-Arroyo regime has undoubtedly already surpassed the ousted Estrada regime. The 544 recorded cases of human rights violations by the Macapagal-Arroyo regime in its first 11 months, principally due to the militarization of the countryside, is greater than the recorded 436 cases in the last 11 months of the Estrada regime.

After Basilan, the degree of

concentration of AFP and PNP troops in Southern Tagalog, especially in Mindoro Oriental, and other places where the revolutionary armed struggle is strong, is most extraordinary. In these places, the peasant masses and minority people have had no respite from the destruction inflicted in the swath of blatant militarization.

After Army Maj. Noel Buan, a prisoner of war of the NPA, was released in Mindoro, the regime took vengeance on the people there by way of widespread, large-scale and continuous search-and-destroy operations, made worse with widespread kidnappings, killings and terrorism in communities suspected to be supportive of the revolutionary movement. In Isabela, the military is presently conducting its most intensive operations since 1995. The militarist policies and measures of the regime have become all the more paramount in the wake of its subservience to the US call and drive for an imperialist war of aggression against Afghanistan. The US "anti-terrorist" war is considered by the puppet regime as a golden opportunity to make the Philippines an instrument of imperialist aggression, in exchange for additional military and financial aid.

To the intense crisis flailing the nation, the Macapagal-Arroyo regime's response has been all-out puppetry to imperialism and the sowing of fascism within the country. The fascist repression of the people who are up in arms due to poverty was all the more affirmed when the maintenance of "peace and order" was pointed to in the Economic Summit as the "key" to economic recovery.

The ruling regime continues to use counterrevolutionary dual tactics of waging all-out military campaigns

against the revolutionary forces and intensive military operations in the revolutionary mass base areas as it flip-flops on the question of peace talks.

The broad ranks of the people, middle forces, church people and others promoting peace are pressing for the continuation of the peace talks. Just as it turned out in the November survey of the Social Weather Stations, the people widely disapprove of the obduracy of the Macapagal-Arroyo regime in regard to the peace talks.

The announcement of the NDFP and GRP panels that the peace talks will resume on January 7, 2002 is good news.

In order for the peace talks to proceed, the Joint Monitoring Committee should be formed to follow the implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL). Negotiations in regard to socio-economic reforms ►



IN THE FACE OF THE UNPRECEDENTED POVERTY OF THE PEOPLE, CORRUPTION AND PROFLIGATE LIFESTYLES OF THE HIGHEST OFFICIALS IN GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING THOSE CLOSEST TO THE PRESIDENT, HAVE BECOME BLATANT.

◀ can be started and agreements arrived at towards the resolution of the basic socio-economic problems in the country.

But the peace talks remain in limbo due to the predominant will of the militarist clique led by Gen. Angelo Reyes. Macapagal-Arroyo nurtures this militarist clique and gives all-out support to the further escalation of concentrated military operations against the revolution and the people.

They impede the progress of the peace talks by insisting on unreasonable preconditions and making other obstructions. They now use as pretext the US “war against terrorism” and the inclusion of the NPA in the new list of those whom the US considers as terrorist, even as the NPA is a revolutionary and liberation army that is against terrorism, and it is in fact the US which is the foremost terrorist in the world.

Whether or not there are peace talks, the revolutionary movement and the people will continue with their life-and-death struggle to eliminate the root causes of prevalent poverty and injustice and establish a free, just, developed and prosperous society that enjoys genuine and lasting peace. **AB**

WORSENING ECONOMIC CRISIS

National Economic Summit

Furthering fascism and tightening the neocolonial stranglehold on the Philippines

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo’s National Socio-Economic Summit held on December 10 served as a signal fire for intensified fascism and the further surrender of Philippine economic sovereignty. Principal bureaucrats, technocrats, representatives of the big comprador bourgeoisie and leaders of yellow unions were assembled supposedly to identify solutions to the economic crisis and unite on them. The extravagant occasion served to propagate baseless optimism on the future of the Philippine economy.

It offered nothing new, however. It merely reiterated and pushed to the hilt previous policies that have impoverished the people and placed the economy in dire straits. It attempted to achieve a consensus on the imposition of policies and laws that would further tighten the neocolonial stranglehold on the Philippines. Among the proposals are laws for the further privatization and denationalization of Filipino enterprises, endorsement of vigilante groups and others.

For the Filipino people, especially for the worker and peasant masses, the resolutions of the Economic Summit will not bring any upliftment or even temporary relief. The policies that Macapagal-Arroyo wishes to continue imposing can only bring about further unemployment, greater dislocation in the countryside, hunger and oppression for the long-impoverished and oppressed people. **AB**

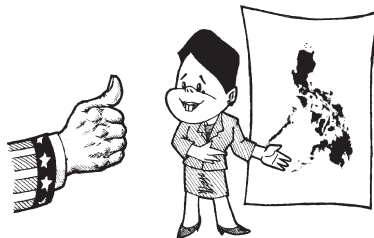
Special Purpose Assets Vehicle

Pushing the Philippines deeper in to the morass of neocolonialism

One of the proposed bills currently being rushed in congress is the Special Purpose Assets Vehicle (SPAV) which aims to further privatize public economic assets and denationalize the country’s economy. It also aims to circumvent the constitutional provision against land ownership in the Philippines by foreign investors.

If the SPAV is enacted, the government will organize a corporation that will purchase and administer the nonperforming assets of banks that have been foreclosed from individuals and corporations that have defaulted on their debts.

Through this law, foreigners will be allowed to buy these properties, including real estate, at bargain prices. This would require an amendment of the government constitution to do away with the provision banning foreigners from acquiring land. Foreign investors will also be given incentives, ►



The National Budget of 2002

Funds for fascism and puppetry

The P780.8 billion national budget for 2002 reflects the intensified fascism and puppetry of the Macapagal-Arroyo regime.

The allocation for the military and police will be augmented by 27% while an additional 40.1% will be allotted for automatic foreign debt servicing. The allocation for foreign debt payments eats up the largest portion, up to P359.8 billion or 46% of the total budget. This translates to P986 million daily allocated for foreign debt payments. The overall allocation for the DND, AFP and PNP is more than P100 billion or 12.8% of the total budget. This would mean a P274 million daily budget for the military and police.

Meanwhile, the education budget was augmented by only 6.7%, and health, 6.4%. Despite Macapagal-Arroyo's much vaunted housing program, budgetary allocations for housing were reduced by 10%. For every person, only P0.35 a day was allocated for health, P3.00 a day for education and P0.05 for housing. While it speaks of land reform, the regime has reduced the budget of the Department of Agrarian Reform by 30% or more than P3 billion. **AB**

Economic crisis

Some significant statistics

Drop in investments. Investments in public and private companies in the economic zones dropped 57% in the first 11 months of the year. It is at its lowest level since 1996. Only \$1.3 billion in foreign direct investments were registered in the first nine months of the year from \$1.7 billion the same period last year. Meanwhile, capital flight reached \$2.9 billion as of end-September.

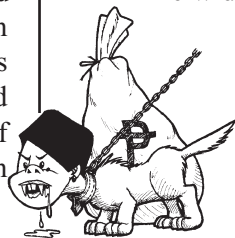
Drop in production. In October, manufacturing dropped 10.1% compared to October 2000. This is the seventh straight month that manufacturing posted a drop. Production has plummeted because of the steep decline in domestic consumption and demands of the export market. Worst hit by the drop in production are petroleum products, beverages, steel and other mineral products, paper and paper products, rubber products and others. Production is only at 75.9% of capacity. More than 40% of enterprises utilize less than 70% of manufacturing capacity.

Closure of enterprises. As of October, 2,294 firms have closed down. This is 20% more than the previous year.

Drop in exports. Income from exports dropped 14% from January to October compared to the same period last year.

Unemployment. In the first 10 months of the Macapagal-Arroyo regime, up to 111,080 workers were laid off permanently. This is 16.3% higher compared to the same period in 2000. Fourteen percent (14%) of these workers were laid off only in the month of October. At the same time, in the first 11 months of the year, 54,549 workers were temporarily laid off, subjected to job rotation or had reduced working hours.

The widespread job dislocation is due to the drop in the market, reorganization, downsizing and losses of 2,294 companies since the terrorist attacks in the US on September 11. *(See related article on unemployment)*



Budget deficit. The government's budget deficit is expected to exceed the P145 billion targets for 2001. **▶**

◀ including tax exemptions.

If signed into law, the SPAV will be one of the most barefaced instruments for further deepening the Philippine neocolonial rut. That the ruling regime has put forward this bill is a desperate measure in the face of a gross lack of resources for running the national government and funding showcase

projects which are supposed to pump-prime the economy. The national government seriously lacks funds due to the slump in overall production; tightening of foreign credit in the past years; slowdown in dollar remittances by OCWs; and the depletion of state assets ever since these were auctioned off wholesale starting 1992. **AB**

Trickery with unemployment statistics



The government boasts that from October 2000 to October 2001, 2.3 million new jobs were created. Thus, the unemployment rate supposedly decreased from 10.1% to 9.8%.

It is important to make an in-depth analysis of the data behind these statistics in order to distinguish between the apparent improvement in employment and the reality of the worsening supply of substantial employment in the country.

Firstly, more than 80% of those supposedly newly employed are in the agricultural (900,000) and service (1.2 million) sectors. Only around 237,000 are in the industrial sector. Industry's share in total employment has decreased

from 16% to 15.6%. In fact, up to 111,080 workers have been retrenched from the private sector from January to October 2001—more than half (50.9%) of them permanently, while 49.1% were placed on job rotation.

The further increase in “employment” in the agriculture and service sectors coupled with reduced employment in the industrial sector emphasize the backward agrarian character of the economy and the lack of a stable industrial sector in the country. This is in fact ironic, because for so long as no genuine industries exist in the country, the capacity of the agricultural and service sectors to create genuine employment cannot be increased.

Of the 2.3 million who supposedly have new jobs, 739,000 are unpaid family workers and 1.2 million are own-account workers (who are self-employed and mostly hold irregular jobs)!

The government's own statistics show that the two million net increase in employment refers to the large-scale replacement of former fulltime workers with casual workers due to “labor flexibility”, “casualization”, “labor only contracting” and other anti-

labor schemes of capitalists and government. There are 2.8 new casuals, contractuels, apprentices and other part-time workers, while 757,000 fulltime workers were booted out of their jobs. Workers are decreasing in number while the ranks of the semiproletariat are fast increasing. In reality, most of the “newly created jobs” are unstable, inconsequential and can usually be found on the fringes of the economy. With 10.9 million of them, part-time workers—who are actually semiproletariat—now comprise more than 37% of the country's total employment.

All this highlights the largely unindustrial, irrelevant and temporary character of the employment being created by the Philippines' semicolonial and semifeudal economy. This is a basic indicator of the continuing and worsening backwardness of the Philippine economy.

The economy's continuing crisis-stricken state, the absence of a national industry and plummeting production will wreak nothing but the continued and further reduction of meaningful employment in the country. **AB**

◀ By September, the target had already exceeded P1.95 billion. In 2000, the budget deficit reached P120 billion. It is expected to further skyrocket to P175 billion in 2002. Because of this, the government has reduced its expenses by 3.5% in the third quarter, causing a further slowdown in the economy.

Trade deficit. As of September, Philippine exports

dropped 22%. Exports of electronic products dropped 22.3%; garments and textile, by 4.4%.

Debt. Because it could not resort to anything else but further borrowings, the government debt increased by P286 billion in the first nine months of the year, 14% higher than P2.035 trillion in 2000. **AB**

Recession in the US, Japan and Germany

Crisis in the centers of capitalism

For the first time since the 1970s, the three centers of capitalism are simultaneously in recession. One after another, the governments and officials of the US, Germany and Japan announced at the end of November and start of December that economic production has been at a standstill or went down in the past six months. At the same time, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reported that the 30 biggest economies in the world shrunk in the past six months—for the first time in the past 20 years. Prior to this, many Third World countries were already in recession.

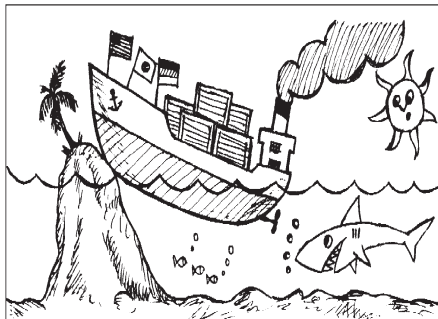
This recession, which has reached the US, the very center of international capitalism, is a result of the crisis of overproduction, especially in electronics and telecommunications. This recession worsens the crisis in the semicolonies, including the Philippines, which are largely dependent on the US and Japan as markets of its export-oriented industries.

The US economy comprises one-fourth of the entire international production. Here, unemployment has reached 5.7%, the highest in the past six years. More than 7.7 million American workers are out of work including 732,000 workers laid off in the past few months. There is still a large inventory of unsold commodities. Interest rates have been pulled down to 1.75% (the lowest in the past 40 years) from 6.5% since the start of 2001, in the hope of jumpstarting production and consumption.

The Japanese economy has been stagnant for more than a decade now. It has reentered into a recession after its economy registered a 2.2% decline in September 2001. This is Japan's second recession since 1998 and is

expected to last until March 2003. Unemployment has reached 5%. This means 3.3 million workers are jobless, the highest number since the end of World War II. Unemployment is expected to reach 5.7% by the end of 2002. Japan's annual trade surplus dropped 57.9% in July, reflecting the crisis of overproduction. The main stock market of Japan (Nikkei) is at its lowest level since 1984.

At the same time, unemployment was reported to have reached 9.2% in Germany. All in all, 3,289 million are out of work, including the 45,000 workers who lost jobs in November. The number of unemployed has steadily risen for the ninth straight month. Production in Germany declined by 0.1% from July-September 2001 and is expected to further drop by the fourth quarter of the year. **AB**

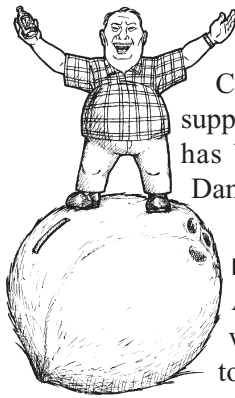


*Danding and the coco
levy funds*

COJUANGCO SHOWS HE IS STILL THE MASTER UNDER THE MACAPAGAL -ARROYO REGIME

Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr., Marcos' most powerful crony and Estrada's patron, is relentless in his maneuverings and continues to lord it over the present regime. Arrangements between the Macapagal-Arroyo government and the Cojuangco camp are being orchestrated that would ensure Cojuangco's continued possession of the coco levy funds, his control over San Miguel Corporation and government support for Danding's landgrabbing schemes involving hundreds of thousands of hectares from Isabela to Negros and Mindanao.

As before, Cojuangco maintains and expands his economic empire by conspiring with the regime in power, making sly and shrewd maneuvers, committing bureaucratic



anomalies and perpetrating fascist violence. Desperate to win over Cojuangco's financial and political support for the 2004 elections, the regime has been shamelessly conniving with Danding.

Secret pro-Cojuangco agreement. On October 28, the Macapagal-Arroyo regime secretly made a deal with the Cojuangco camp supposedly to reconcile the interests of the opposing parties regarding the ownership of the coco levy funds. The fund has since grown to P130 billion. Cojuangco continues to monopolize and use these funds. Coconut farmers have been trying to reclaim the entire fund since it was accumulated through the levies extracted from them from 1973 to 1982. The regime planned to make the secret agreement official through an Executive Order.

Under the agreement, P50 billion from the coco levy fund (27% of SMC shares) would be sold and converted into a trust fund purportedly for the rehabilitation of the coconut industry. The Philippine Coconut Producers' Federation (COCOFED) would manage the trust fund, supposedly in the name of the farmers. COCOFED is not an organization of farmers but of big landlords and big comprador bourgeoisie who have business interests in the coconut industry. It is led by one of Cojuangco's co-conspirators in the secret deal, Maria Clara Lobregat. Thus, Cojuangco retains the privilege of using the funds and the benefits thereof.

The anomalous arrangement has since been exposed and roundly condemned by farmers' organizations, democratic mass organizations and the people. Even the Presidential Commission on Good Government has asserted that the coco levy funds are not private but public funds. In connection with the deal, the People's Consultative Assembly (Macapagal-Arroyo's erstwhile ally in EDSA 2) has exposed that Cojuangco would make a huge payment for Macapagal-Arroyo's use in 2004 and other purposes. Pelted with even more criticism, Macapagal-Arroyo has been forced to back down from the deal.

Public funds. Macapagal-Arroyo and Cojuangco's secret deal has been stripped of legal basis since the Supreme Court declared on December 14 that the coco levy funds were public in nature. In this regard, all enterprises funded from the coco levy will henceforth be held by government, including the UCPB and the

27% sequestered shares of SMC. Thus, the government will regain full ownership and control over UCPB and the five seats at SMC still held by Estrada's people. (See related article)

Still coconut farmers will not benefit from all this. They will neither be given direct control nor will they have a voice in deciding the use of the funds. Instead, the funds will be controlled by big bureaucrats and big comprador bourgeoisie close to the regime. The funds will be used to further bureaucratic corruption as well as bogus and antipeasant projects purporting to assist coconut farmers.

SMC still in Danding's hands. With the coco levy funds being declared public funds, Cojuangco will supposedly retain only the 20% SMC shares that he has been claiming, and which, in fact, still comprise ill-gotten wealth. Thus, a few hours before the Supreme Court declaration, Cojuangco maneuvered to ensure his continued control over SMC. ^{AB}

SMC-Kirin Agreement

Cojuangco's maneuvers to maintain control over SMC

Danding Cojuangco continues to lord it over San Miguel Corporation (SMC) in the newest scheme involving Kirin Brewery, a Japanese monopoly corporation. Cojuangco and his ilk in SMC sold 443 new stocks worth \$540 million (P27.88 billion) or 15% of the company to Kirin. This was part of Cojuangco's backroom maneuvers to maintain and firm up his control over SMC. After a brief display of displeasure, the Macapagal-Arroyo regime fully supported the sale.

The sale of new stocks of SMC would increase the total equity shares and therefore decrease the percentages held by the present owners of the stocks. This scheme plans to dilute the control of government in the directorship of the company. The percentage of the sequestered stocks held by the government would decrease from 27% to 24%. The proportion of other ►

◀ government-owned stocks held by GSIS and SSS would dwindle from 11% to 9.6%. Therefore the entire block of stocks held by the government would decrease from 38% to 33.6%.

Cojuangco's direct shares in SMC would also decrease from 20% to 17.4%, but as a result of the agreement with Kirin, their shares would constitute a single block creating a 37.4% solid pro-Cojuangco stock vote, bigger than the government block. Another 30% of the shares are held by various stockholders represented and, in effect controlled by, the SMC management. Combined with the solid block of shares held by the Cojuangco-Kirin group, they would eventually control 67.4% of the shares of SMC and thus the votes to the board of directors.

Large blocks of stocks control proportional numbers of seats in the 15-person board of directors of SMC. Thus, the key to winning the fierce battle over the control of SMC is control over the number of representatives in the board of directors. Each of the 15 directors has one vote each. Kirin's purchase of 15% of the company's shares entitles it to two seats in the board. Under the terms of the sale, the two directors from Kirin and the three directors for Cojuangco are obliged to vote as one entity for the next five years. In addition, Kirin is bound to offer first option of purchase to Cojuangco in case it decides to sell its shares of the company. The various small stockholders of SMC have three proxy votes represented by SMC management directors and are therefore Cojuangco's minions. By count, Cojuangco has control over eight votes in the directorship. This exceeds the seven-strong block vote of the government by one vote, notwithstanding the appointment of PCGG representatives to replace the five pro-Cojuangco Estrada appointees.

Instead of opposing Cojuangco's schemes, Macapagal-Arroyo acclaimed it as the "first major direct foreign investment" in the country this year. Macapagal-Arroyo even went as far as to announce that she does not have any intentions of replacing Cojuangco as chairman of SMC. All attempts by the government to control SMC have therefore been nothing but gimmicky. **AB**



The biggest case in the history of the puppet republic

Danding seizes lands in Isabela

Even as the issue of bourgeois comprador and Marcos and Estrada crony Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco's seizure of the coco levy funds and his maneuverings to control the San Miguel Corporation (SMC) reverberates nationwide, his aggressive and massive schemes to grab farmers' lands in Northern Luzon, Negros and Mindanao are gaining notoriety.

The biggest landgrabbing and forcible land-use conversion case in the history of the puppet republic is now taking place in northwestern Isabela. According to correspondence reports from the Filomena Asuncion Front of the New People's Army in Isabela, this involves 150,000 hectares of land in the towns of Mallig, Quezon, Delfin Albano, Sto. Tomas, Sta. Maria, Quirino and other adjacent towns. Cojuangco has been perpetrating his landgrabbing scheme through SMC which he currently controls and manages.

Cojuangco's massive seizure of lands has engendered resistance among thousands of people in the plains of northwestern Isabela. Thus, underground mass organizations as well as open organizations of peasants, women, youth, professionals and other multisectoral formations are fast expanding. Various

forms of resistance to Danding's scheme are now advancing—armed and unarmed, legal and illegal.

Settler-farmers in the area have put up such resistance because their farmlands are now being gobbled up by SMC's gigantic cassava plant- ►



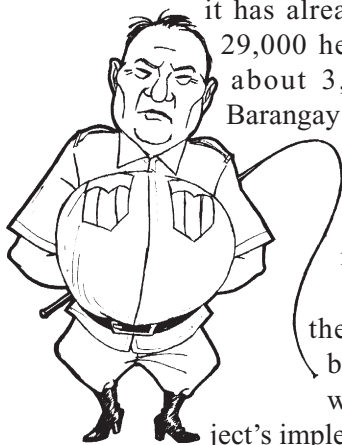
ation in the area known as the Mallig Plains. According to the SMC scheme, peasants in the Mallig Plains are supposed to set aside their usual products to become contract growers of cassava for SMC. In providing fertilizers, pesticides and other farm inputs on credit, SMC will serve as a big usurer-landlord to farmers contracted to plant cassava. The harvested cassava will be processed into flour in factories to be set up in Quezon town. SMC also plans to put up an animal feeds factory in the area. Farmers will be obliged to sell their harvests to SMC at a price dictated by the latter.

SMC's co-conspirator in this project is Faustino Dy Jr., congressman of the second district of Isabela, and the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR). The local reactionary reactionary government has thrown its full support for the project by providing the needed infrastructure.

In a move to deceive the peasants and facilitate SMC's claim over the farmers' lands, the corporation has put up a bogus cooperative, the Valley Planters Development Corp. (VAPDECO) whose members are farmers under contract to plant cassava. It is the VAPDECO that is now recognized by DAR as the "agrarian reform" beneficiary in the lands encompassed by the project. In this manner, anyone who refuses to go along with Cojuangco's scheme will be pushed to the wall, go hungry if not outrightly evicted. Up to 100,000 settler-farmers who have long been tilling lands in this area will be victimized by this project.

Since SMC started the project last year, it has already grabbed up to 29,000 hectares, excluding about 3,000 hectares in Barangay Santiago, Quirino that have been bulldozed by SMC to set up a cassava nursery.

A company of the 45th IB has also been deployed to watch over the project's implementation. **AB**



Agrarian revolution reaps gains in Isabela

The agrarian revolution campaign continues to reap gains in the various guerrilla fronts of Isabela.

At the Reynaldo Piñon Front in northeastern Isabela, an estimated 6,000 families in 40 villages in two towns have benefited from different forms of antifeudal struggle:

The price per kilo of corn was raised 60% (from P4.50-5.00 to P7.20).

The price per hundred pieces of banana was raised by P10 to P20 and fraudulent means of counting were stopped.

Interests on loans were successfully lowered 50% (from 30%-40% to 15%-20% per harvest).

Farmers also succeeded in blocking a deceptive DENR project from proceeding in a cluster of seven barrios in a town. The project would have evicted 1,000 families from their farms.

In another sitio in the same town, peasants who had long been tilling lands in the area were able to stop a landlord from having the lands surveyed, divided into parcels and titled for distribution to his children.

In a village in San Mariano, the takehome pay of farm workers for weeding was raised when they began being paid on the basis of the number of rows of rice plants they could weed instead of being paid by the day.

Rental for the use of corn shellers was lowered by P2/sack (from P10 per sack to P8/sack).

The farmers have also been waging struggle against the exploitative way corn and palay prices are set, where 20-50 centavos are shaved off the price per kilo due to *resiko*, or the expected reduction in weight once the grain dries.

At the Benito Tesorio Front in southern Isabela, farmers in a barrio waged organized struggle to resist the conspiracy between their barangay captain and a capitalist-landlord to grab their farms and have them planted to Gmelina.

At the Filomena Asuncion Front in northwestern Isabela, wages of farm workers hired on a gross rate contract basis (*pakyawan*) to plant palay were raised 16.7% in a cluster of barrios. Wages for *sikka* or uprooting rice seedlings were also raised, from 20 centavos to 25 centavos per *kirkir* or bundle of rice seedlings. One-hundred families immediately benefited.

In the same cluster of barrios, rental for the use of rice threshers was lowered from P10.00 to P7.00 per sack of palay. **AB**

Ka Haren and Ka Baste

Revolutionary heroism in the face of the enemy

ON THE AFTERNOON OF OCTOBER 9, 2001, troops of the 50th IB encountered a unit of the NPA Alfredo Cesar Command in Ilocos Sur deployed in San Gaspar, Salcedo. In the ensuing firefight, two comrades died and a fascist enemy soldier was wounded.

Ka Baste (Victorino "Bong" Madarang), was the unit's team leader. It was he who was able to fire first and hit one of the enemy soldiers. After the wounded soldier fell, the enemy responded with rapid fire. Ka Baste ordered the unit to retreat. While the comrades were maneuvering to withdraw, Ka Baste heroically faced the attacking enemy troops in an effort to scatter their ranks and pin them down. In the exchange of fire, Ka Baste was hit in the chest. With his dying breath and last ounce of strength, he told his comrades to take his rifle and his other things and urged them to "carry on the struggle."

Meanwhile, Ka Haren (Glory Bangtuan) had followed Ka Baste to support him in pinning down the enemy. In the firefight, she was slightly wounded in the temple.

Ka Haren was alive when taken by the enemy. Some villagers tried to apply first aid on her but were prevented by the soldiers from doing so. Instead, the butchers purposely left Ka Haren to bleed to death and suffer all night. By the time she was taken to a hospital the following day, it was too late. According to a doctor who

examined Ka Haren, she would have survived if she had been given proper medical attention.

In an interview with the media, the military told a

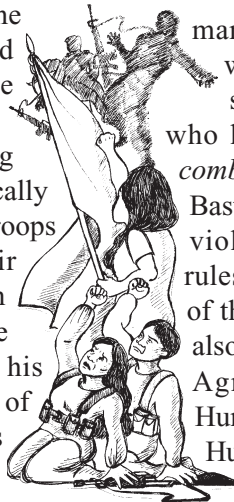
brazen lie in claiming that the soldiers were unable to immediately bring Ka Haren to a hospital, since the wounded soldier was promptly brought to a medical facility.

Meantime, Ka Baste's body was mercilessly riddled with bullets. He had received two fatal gunshot wounds in the chest. But when relatives claimed his body, it had been riddled with bullet holes from head to foot.

The Alfredo Cesar Command strongly condemned the willful deprivation of medical services to Ka Haren, a fighter who had been rendered *hors de combat*, and the desecration of Ka Baste's remains. These are brazen violations of the international rules of war, Protocols I and II of the Geneva Conventions. This also violated the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL).

These agreements clearly stipulate that parties in conflict are obliged to extend proper medical attention to adversaries captured or wounded in action and no longer able to fight. It strictly prohibits torture and summary executions and the desecration of dead bodies.

The Alfredo Cesar Command paid tribute to the heroism and courage shown by Ka Baste and Ka Haren, whom they hailed as true heroes of the revolution. Their gallantry shines ever brighter in the face of the savagery of the reactionary and despised AFP. **AB**



ON THE STATUS OF THE POWS IN FAR SOUTH MINDANAO

THE VALENTIN PALAMINE Command (VPC) of the NPA-Far South Mindanao has assured the GRP that the prisoners of war under its care namely Sgt. Jeremias Rosete Jr., Pepito Simbulan, Wilfredo Maldecir and Herminia Sorongon Maldecir are being treated humanely. They were arrested on September 4 in Barangay Lam-alis, Columbio, Sultan Kudarat for acts of espionage against the revolutionary movement.

According to Ka Dencio Madrigal, commander of the VPC, the four POWs had pending cases for violations of international rules of war.

The VPC assured that the trial process for the POWs were in accordance with the legal and judicial systems and processes of the People's Democratic Government and the provisions of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL). They have been accorded humane treatment and have been through the proper judicial processes. The comrades are also providing Sergeant Rosete with the necessary medical attention.

The NDFP negotiating panel is now preparing for the release of the four POWs upon receipt of the request from the GRP forwarded in November.

The VPC decried the intensified military operations of the AFP in Far South ►



People's travails in 11 months of militarization

The record of the Macapagal-Arroyo regime on human rights in less than a year in Malacañang is dismal. According to Karapatan, the regime registered 544 cases of grave violations. This includes 137 cases of arbitrary arrest and detention; 38 victims in nine recorded cases of massacres; 39 persons summarily executed and 77 cases of torture. The unbridled terror unleashed by AFP and PNP personnel in the implementation of Oplan Makabayan/ Oplan Balangai contributed to the grave record of violations.

Basilan and Southern Tagalog, particularly the island of Mindoro, experienced the biggest concentration of military operations and bore the worst beatings from state fascism this year. This resulted in grave and rampant abuses against civilians who were falsely accused by the marauding military forces.

The following are some of the latest human rights violations of the Macapagal-Arroyo regime:

December 15. Felix Robregado, Gerard Mendoza and Iner Bulusan were slapped with trumped-up charges in connection with the assassination of Cagayan

Congressman Rodolfo Aguinaldo. Felix Robregado was falsely accused because his ID was supposedly recovered near the scene of the killing. In fact, Robregado had been booked by the military on almost all "insurgency"-related crimes for some years now. Meanwhile, innocent civilians like Mendoza and Bulusan were picked up as suspects despite the fact that the NPA had admitted meting justice on Aguinaldo for crimes committed against the people.

December 8. Nicanor de los Santos, a Dumagat tribal leader, was summarily executed by members of Task Force Panther under Col. Laureano Tolentino in Antipolo City. De los Santos, secretary-general of Makabayang Samahan ng mga Katutubong Dumagat, was accused of being a Red commander of the NPA who was killed in an encounter with the Task Force.

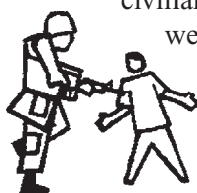
According to his companions, however, they were getting ready to attend a march-rally in Manila Hotel where Macapagal-Arroyo's "Economic Summit" was convened, when the soldiers attacked. Task Force Tanggol Karapatan is crying out for justice on De los Santos' execution. It added that the military had also prevented eight buses loaded with farmers from

joining the march.

December 7. Melchor delos Santos, 27, a "rebel returnee", his father Dominador, 49 and his brother Falcon, 21 were killed because he was suspected of involvement in the destruction of telecommunications cell sites in Tarlac and the killing of two policemen in November.

November. About 12,522 families or 59,407 people were forced to evacuate when troops of the regime conducted pursuit operations against the MNLF who staged an assault in Zamboanga.

Last week of October to the last week of November. Troops from the 38th, 39th and 49th IB of the Philippine Army sowed terror in the barangays of Bakung, Batang, Guangan, Caridad, Lampanag and Bituin, all of Tulum, North Cotabato. Despite an agreement between the military and the residents to make the area a zone of peace, the AFP continues to conduct operations on the pretext that this was an NPA stronghold. Against the people's outright demand for the soldiers to leave, the troops continue to intervene in barangay affairs and collect food "donations" from barangay residents. Those who refuse to cooperate are accused of being communists or supporters of the NPA. ►



◄ Mindanao, especially in the eight towns covered by Western Mining Corporation which is also a guerrilla zone. The custodial force for the POWs have already had two encounters with the military. Ka Madrigal reiterated

the demand for the immediate cessation of operations so as not to endanger the lives of the POWs and to prevent a repeat of the fate of P/CI Abelardo Martin on March 8 in Southern Tagalog. AB



◀ **November – December.**

Around 500 soldiers from the 36th and 24th IB set up camp in San Luis, Agusan del Sur to protect the \$25 million IFMA project funded by the Asian Development Bank. On the pretext that they were doing Military-Barangay Social Development work, the soldiers demand food from the villagers, intervene in barangay affairs and are always conducting a census of the entire village.



Barangay officials have opposed the occupation of the barangay center and its use as a command post of the military and have petitioned for the immediate removal of the troops from their barrios.

Cesar Mantindahan of Balit was coerced by the soldiers to compel all his fellow villagers to “surrender” supposedly because they were all NPA. They even accused the Banwaon datus of being communists.

The datus are traditional leaders of the towns covered by the 110,000-hectare IFMA project. The military has displayed wanton disrespect for the indigenous practices of the people and has even accused religious sisters staying in the area of being members of the NPA.

Middle of October. For more than one week, military elements of the 402nd Brigade terrorized the people in the town of San Luis, Agusan del Sur as they conducted pursuit operations against the NPA guerrillas who raided the police station on October 8. They encamped in civilian households and ransacked the dormitory for children studying at Urios Extension School.

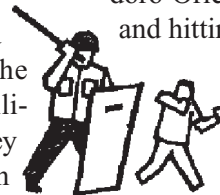
October 31. Troops from the 45th IB burned the house of Mrs.

Romy Lemos of Barangay Santiago, Quirino, Isabela. *(See related article on Cojuangco landgrabbing in Mallig Plains)*

October. As a result of the biggest military operation in Isabela and other parts of Cagayan Valley since 1995, human rights violations have increased. The simultaneous operations began on October 8 and covered the towns of San Guillermo, Jones, Echague, San Agustin, all of Isabela. Eight farmers were tortured while 17 families were harassed. Troops from the 41st, 45th, 54th and 48th IB stole farm animals and destroyed farmers’ crops.

October 11. Budbud Osting, a 65-year-old Mangyan was beheaded by the CAFGU in Mansalay, Mindoro Oriental.

Hundreds of Mangyan families have already evacuated to safety for fear of reprisal from the military. About 15 families have relocated to Manila for medical treatment due to torture and gunshot wounds. They have appealed to Macapagal-Arroyo for the immediate pullout of the military in their areas so they could safely return and live in peace.



October 8. Elements of the 54th IB from Digdig, Carranglan, Nueva Ecija massacred Jay-ar Albendia, Marvin Cusep, Leo Gallardo, Gertrude Curamen and Jose Martin—all fisherfolk from Sitio Tuli, Barangay Conversion, Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija. Soldiers from the 54th IB vented their ire on the fisherfolk whom they chanced upon near the river where their troops had earlier encountered the NPA, resulting in the death of Capt.

Rogelio Eligino and the wounding of four soldiers *(see related story on a defensive operation turned into an offensive by the NPA in the AB October issue)*. All the victims were brutally tortured and bore frontal gunshot wounds. Curamen’s eyes were gouged out of its sockets, his fingers were fractured, his neck stabbed and his head hacked with a bolo. Cusep had fractured legs and hands and also bore hack wounds on his neck. Martin was shot in both eyes, fracturing his skull. The relatives of the victims found their bodies sprawled naked near the river.

October 8. Two community leaders of Mansalay, Mindoro Oriental, Barangay Captain Roger Fernando and Rolando Cabagay, were killed by troops of the 16th Bde and CAFGU right in front of their families.

October 5. CAFGU elements and soldiers belonging to the 204th Bde shot at the house of Bernard and Belly Montoya in Mansalay, Mindoro Oriental, crushing Belly’s foot and hitting Bernard in the arm.

Third week of September. Grechen Valdez and other students of La Sallete University, Cagayan State University and other colleges in Isabela and Cagayan were harassed and threatened after joining a rally on September 21. Pastor Joseph Agpaoa, a church worker who also joined the rally was abducted and threatened. The military warned them against joining rallies and similar activities.

September 22. Two leaders of a farmers’ organization in Mansalay, Mindoro Oriental were arrested by the military and CAFGU and are still missing. **AB**

DUE TO THE INSTIGATION
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ISRAEL IS PRESSURING
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With full US imperialism support

ISRAEL INTENSIFIES ATTACKS ON PALESTINIANS

The occupationist and fascist Israel government has intensified its attacks and bombings of Palestine territories. This, after US imperialism endorsed Israel's attacks on the pretext of "self-defense" against "terrorist groups". Israel is using the suicide bombings and other attacks by radical Palestinian forces on Israelis as an excuse to launch an indiscriminate bombing, firing and killing campaign. As of December, 60 Palestinians had already been killed by the relentless attacks of Israeli troops. Many of the victims were children.

Almost all past agreements between the Palestinian Liberation Organization and Israel which attempted to resolve the already drawn out harsh and bloody contradiction between the Palestinian people and Israeli state have been set aside and abandoned. The Israeli government withdrew its past recognition of the Palestinian Authority and its president, Yasser Arafat. Due to the instigation of the US and imperialist nations in Europe, Israel is pressuring Arafat to repress his own people. This is an attempt to weaken Palestinian unity and turn the different factions against each other.

Prior to this, Palestinians opposed the attempt to legitimize Israel's occupation of Palestine through a deceptive peace agreement peddled by the US. In this agreement, the US will order Israeli troops to withdraw from Palestine if Palestinians withdraw their demand

for strategic parts of their territories (including the main city of Jerusalem). In keeping with their long history of militancy and armed struggle, Palestinians intensified their struggle against the violent and barbaric occupation of their territories by the puppet Israeli government.

Palestinians launched anew an *intifada* or armed uprising against Israeli occupation in September 2000 after the last US-sponsored peace talks collapsed. Since then, almost 900 Palestinians and 233 Israelis have been killed in the war. At the heart of the Palestinian struggle is the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. Presently, the centers of conflict are in the Gaza Strip and West Bank areas, mainly Jerusalem, which Israel has occupied since 1967. The occupation has been condemned by many nations and peoples. **AB**



Due to grave crisis

UPRISING ERUPTS IN ARGENTINA

THE further worsening of the economic crisis in Argentina has resulted in turmoil and a subsequent popular uprising. Pres. Fernando de la Rúa was forced to resign on December 20, the second day of intense protest actions and riots in different parts of the country.

The violence erupted when hundreds of hungry citizens thronged to supermarkets and stole food on December 18. Some shops were

also burned by the desperate crowd. Five persons were killed, more than 100 were injured and around 350 were arrested when police reacted violently.

De la Rúa declared a 30-day state of siege on December 19 to suppress the spreading disorder, suspending constitutional rights and giving the government broad powers to quell the violence.

But the declaration of a state of siege only heightened the people's anger. Even de la Rúa's pledge to ►

◀ release \$7 million in food assistance to the needy failed to ward off thousands of people from taking to the streets of the capital Buenos Aires to demand his resignation. They honked their car horns and beat pots and pans in protest. Three labor unions in the province of Cordoba declared a general strike.

By the time de la Rúa resigned, 26 had died, 200 injured and more than 2,000 arrested in connection with the widespread uprising.

Intense protests continue as chances of finding a solution to the crisis in time are naught. Within a mere 11 days since de la Rúa resigned, four successors had already also resigned for failing to take decisive steps regarding the crisis.

THE UPRISING ERUPTED AS A RESULT OF the nation's grave crisis. The Argentine economy has been in recession for almost four years now, pushing the unemployment rate to 20%. Poverty and popular discontent worsened even more when de la Rúa adopted an austerity measure in compliance with the dictates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), cutting down the budget for basic social services.

The Argentine economy is facing impending collapse due to the government's incapacity to avoid defaulting on its \$132 billion debt. Ninety-seven billion dollars (\$97 billion) or over 73% of its debt is set to mature soon. Six hundred million dollars (\$600 million) worth of bonds are due by the end of December.

Should Argentina default on its loans, it would be the worst case ever by any debtor country in history. Without outside help, Argentina's chances of avoiding such a fate is nil.

The bad news is that the IMF now refuses to release its \$1.3 billion assistance package due to the country's failure to balance its budget despite the imposed austerity. The US has likewise declared that no immediate assistance can be expected from it. **AB**

CPP DECLARES YULETIDE CEASEFIRE

IN DEFERENCE TO THE TRADITIONAL CELEBRATION of the Christmas holidays, the Central Committee (CC) of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) instructed all commands and units of the New People's Army (NPA) and the people's militias to temporarily desist from launching offensives against the military, police and paramilitary forces of the reactionary government.

In its December 8 declaration released through the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), the CC stated that the ceasefire would take effect upon the reciprocal and concurrent ceasefire order from the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) within the period of December 15, 2001 to January 15, 2002.

According to the declaration, however, the NPA shall remain vigilant and shall undertake active defense against surveillance and offensive actions of the enemy during the truce.

After the GRP declared a ceasefire to last only until January 6, the NDFP clarified that the cessation of NPA offensives shall end on the same date.



"HAIL THE RISING REVOLUTIONARY FORCES"

— ARMANDO LIWANAG

"We hail the rising revolutionary forces and the upsurge of the mass movement."

Thus declared Comrade Armando Liwanag, chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) in his message on the Party's 33rd anniversary on December 26. He said, "We have made significant advances in building the Party as the advanced detachment of the working class, the New People's Army as the main instrument for seizing political power and the united front as the means for rallying the broadest range of people to the revolutionary cause" due to our adherence to the correct ideological, political and organizational line.

He particularly cited that in the previous year, a dramatic victory was achieved in overthrowing the ruling US-Estrada clique by employing the tactics of the broad united front.

In this regard, the line that any ruling clique may be overthrown by the Party and the masses in accordance with the line of the broad united front has been clearly advanced and thus we may accumulate strength and experience until the entire ruling system of big compradors and big landlords can be overthrown.

Comrade Liwanag also cited the crisis of the local ruling system and the world capitalist system as extremely favorable conditions for revolution.

"We are confident that in the next ten years we shall be ►

◀ able to make great strides in the new-democratic revolution and that the anti-imperialist and socialist movements in the world shall surge forward in an unprecedented way

amidst the worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and the great disorder due to wars of aggression and campaigns of repression,” added Comrade Liwanag.

Chairman Armando Liwanag’s entire message has been printed as a special issue of **Ang Bayan**.

NPA PUNISHES BUS COMPANY IN CEBU

RED FIGHTERS OF THE VICENTE PADAYAO BRIGADE set fire to a passenger bus of Philtranco Bus Lines on December 11 in Barangay Panalipan, Catmon, Cebu.

According to Silvino “Ka Bino” Clamucha, spokesman of the NPA in the Central Visayas region, the company was punished because of its refusal to pay taxes to the revolutionary movement.

Three Red fighters boarded a Philtranco bus travelling the Cebu-Bogo-Tacloban City route and ordered the bus to stop at Barangay Panalipan where other Red fighters were positioned.

Other guerrillas set up checkpoints to prevent other vehicles from getting close to the place where the bus was burned. Damage was estimated at P3 million.

ARMY CAPTAIN AMBUSHED BY NPA IN AURORA

A PHILIPPINE ARMY OFFICER DIED ON THE SPOT WHEN Red fighters ambushed him in Barangay Suklayin, Baler Aurora on December 12. Capt. Eufonio Villaluz, personnel officer of the 70th IB, was on the way back to his unit when he was ambushed.

POLICE INFORMER IN COMPOSTELA VALLEY PUNISHED

ROGER VALDEZ, A POLICE INFORMER, WAS METED THE death penalty by the NPA in Barangay Bucana Banlag, Monkayo, Compostela Valley on December 6.

MACAPAGAL-ARROYO ORDERS COLLECTION OF OWWA MEMBERSHIP FEE

AMIDST THE STRUGGLE OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFWs) for a just wage, Magapagal-Arroyo has imposed an additional fee upon them. She has directed the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to implement Memorandum of Instruction No. 8 which requires OFWs to pay US\$25 to the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) for membership in the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA).

To ensure compliance, OFWs who fail to pay would not to be issued overseas employment certificates.

According to Migrante, the militant organization of OFWs, the fee will deduct more than P1,275 from the their wages.

RIFT IN MACAPAGAL-ARROYO CAMP BARED

THE RIFT WITHIN THE RULING REACTIONARY CLIQUE came into public view when ex-president Fidel Ramos hinted at his plan to run in the 2004 presidential elections, notwithstanding a similar plan by Macapagal-Arroyo.

Ramos is rekindling his unsuccessful ambition to extend his presidential term. According to him, only an ex-president’s bid for the presidency could test and clarify constitutional “grey areas” concerning the reelection of a former president.

Although Ramos formally denies having such plans, Macapagal-Arroyo remains apprehensive given the ex-president’s record of untruthfulness with regard to his political plans.

Personalities identified with Ramos are also behind the People’s Consultative Assembly’s (PCA) strong criticism of Macapagal-Arroyo, her husband Miguel and government officials close to her in connection with anomalies involving billions of pesos.



FAILURE TO REACH ACCORD WITH THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT AMONG REASONS FOR DROP IN MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S APPROVAL RATING—SWS

“THE GOVERNMENT’S FAILURE TO REACH AN ACCORD WITH communist rebels” is one of the three main reasons behind the drop in Macapagal-Arroyo popularity rating.

This is according to the latest survey of the bourgeois Social Weather Stations on November 3-21. The other two reasons identified were the failure of the campaign against illegal drugs and the

failure to collect taxes from big businessmen.

The survey also showed that the majority believe that the government has not done enough to eliminate corruption, lower the prices of basic commodities, eradicate crimes against ordinary people, solve the Abu Sayyaf problem and promote genuine autonomy for the Moros in Mindanao.

COUP D'ÉTAT WHISTLEBLOWER KILLED

CAPT. BARON CERVANTES, spokesperson of a Young Officers Union (YOU) faction, was slain on December 31 after he exposed a planned coup by YOU and the Rebolusyonaryong Alayansang Makabansa (RAM) against the Macapagal-Arroyo regime.

According to Cervantes, YOU and RAM held a secret meeting on December 24 in Puerto Azul in Cavite to plan Oplan Noche Buena against the government.

Cervantes is identified with the loose pro-Macapagal-Arroyo faction of the ruling class.

ALLIANCE AGAINST AGROCHEMICAL COMPANIES FORMED

LED BY THE KILUSANG MAGBUBUKID NG PILIPINAS (KMP), the International Alliance Against Agrochemical Transnational Corporations (IAAATNCs) was established on December 3. The alliance comprising 25 organizations and individuals from the country and abroad aims to confront agrochemical companies on issues concerning pesticides, genetically modified organisms (GMO), food security and the right to land.

The KMP also launched a campaign to gather one million signatures against the field testing of Bt corn and BB rice and to reiterate their resistance to the Plant Variety Protection Bill which gives the agrochemical companies exclusive rights to patented seeds. The KMP lambasted imperialist agrochemical companies like Monsanto for their control of Philippine agriculture resulting from their monopoly of chemical inputs and their promotion of GMOs in the country.

80,000 MARCH AGAINST EU SUMMIT

SOME 80,000 PEOPLE MARCHED DECEMBER 10 in Brussels, Belgium to demand from the European Union (EU) a greater role for labor in the formulation of social policies and the reduction of unemployment. The demonstrators demanded quality social services, promotion of workers' rights, better working conditions in the workplace,

and resistance against globalization.

The mobilization was launched on the eve of the two-day gathering of EU leaders. It was led by the European Trade Union Confederation which represents 60 million workers in 25 European countries.

